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April 23, 2004

Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: Elimination of Rate-of-Return Regulation of ILECs,
Petition for Rulemaking, RM-10822;
Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service,
CC Docket No. 96-45**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of Western Wireless Corp. ("Western Wireless"), Gene DeJordy and Mark Rubin of Western Wireless, Susan Gately of Economics & Technology, Inc. ("ETI"); and I made three *ex parte* presentations yesterday regarding the above-captioned proceedings. We met with: (1) Christopher Libertelli, Senior Legal Advisor to Chairman Powell, and Trey Hanbury of the Office of General Counsel; (2) Matthew Brill, Senior Legal Advisor to Commissioner Abernathy, and Darah Smith, legal intern to Commissioner Abernathy; and (3) Richard Lerner, Associate Bureau Chief/Chief of Staff, Wireline Competition Bureau ("WCB"); Rodger Woock, Chief Economist, WCB; Steven Morris, Deputy Chief, Pricing Policy Division, WCB; and Ted Burmeister, Tony Dale, and Geoff Waldau of the WCB staff.

We focused on ETI's economic analysis in support of Western Wireless' petition for rulemaking to eliminate rate-of-return regulation, presented with Western Wireless' reply comments in the above-captioned proceeding. We also discussed related universal service issues, and we handed out copies of materials previously filed in the record.

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If you have any questions, please contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David Sieradzki". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David L. Sieradzki
Counsel for Western Wireless Corp.

cc: Staff members listed above